



# 4th Worcester Park Scout Group

# Friends of the Fourth

## Newsletter

**Summer Edition 2011**

**No. 27**

### Editorial

As mentioned in a previous edition of the Newsletter, we felt we needed to review the subscription rate for membership of the Friends owing to increases in the postage rate in recent years. However, many of you make additional generous donations, over and above the £2 annual subscription, which are all handed to the Group. In view of this, we have decided to retain the annual membership fee at £2, and encourage you to continue to send donations as you see fit. Our grateful thanks.

As usual, we would encourage you to drop us a line, phone us, or e-mail with news or stories from your time in the Fourth. Details of how to contact us are at the end of the newsletter. Also, please continue to encourage former members of the Group with whom you are still in touch to join the Friends.

### News from the Group

At the beginning of 2011, Paul Green, our GSL, wrote: “Well done EVERYONE for their hard work over 2010 and proving how successful Scouts can be. I have been looking at our membership numbers and expect it to have risen to around 200 young people and 100 adults - topping the 300 mark. This is the largest the group has been for over 10 years. We have managed to re-open our Birch Beaver Colony and continue to run one of the largest Active Support units in the country. This is all down to us working together and being a team, showing how good we are and how well we work together.”

In fact, the Group now has 306 members with over 200 young people involved.

The “Active Support Unit” mentioned by Paul is the successor to the Group Fellowship and is now organised in two parts. “Virgo” is for the less active consisting of members of the current Fellowship, while “Taurus” consists of a group of young adults who are mobile with 4x4’s and are active as leaders or helpers, although not necessarily in the Fourth. “Taurus” members hit the local headlines back in snowy January. The Headquarters News pages reported their activities thus:

## **Scouts in snowy Surrey take to the roads in 4x4s**

**21/12/2010**

**Scouts have once again been out supporting their local communities through the current arctic weather conditions.**

Members of Scout 4x4, a Scout Active Support Unit in Surrey, have been out helping local emergency services. They have had drivers on the road with the ambulance service, Surrey Police and meals on wheels, as well as responding to one more unconventional emergency coming to rescue a bride and groom!

### **Service crews and local support**

Scout 4x4 was set up as an Active Support Unit for Members with a common interest in off-roading and a willingness to help out where needed, and since their formation in 2008, they have been busy not just running off-road days and 4x4 shows, but also working as service crews at Scouting events and supporting their local communities during adverse weather.

They were first called out to help Surrey emergency services in December 2009, and since then they have been out on the roads in January of this year, and again during the last cold snap at the beginning of this month, when, apart from their other duties, they were involved with the search for a vulnerable missing person.

### **Keeping the wheels turning**

'Usually it's the first couple of days of severe weather when we do most of our work', said Paul Green (Group Scout Leader, 4th Worcester Park), one of the two Unit Members who act as 'first contact' for services in need of support. All the drivers are Scout Leaders or Association Members working as volunteers and anyone needing their services contacts either Paul or his colleague Chris directly.

Among other tasks, Scout 4x4 makes sure that core workers in crucial services like the police are able to get to and from work, and that any equipment that they need is delivered to the right place at the right time.

And this week it was more than just supplies that needed last-minute transportation, when volunteers found themselves heading out to pick up and deliver a fellow Scout Leader to his own wedding. Thankfully both bride and groom made it to the church on time, and their whiter-than-usual wedding went ahead as planned.

At the recent County AGM, Paul Green was presented with a gift from the bride and groom mentioned.

In looking at the other sections in the Group, we can report that Silver Troop are continuing to tend the vegetable garden occupying space in front of the Chapel (the old Rover Den), while Anglia Pack are managing a wildlife garden at the rear of the Apeldoorn building. A much needed new floor has been provided in the Apeldoorn building while ground clearance has continued to take place, helped with the purchase of a new large motor mower.

Planning permission has been granted for a new building for archery and an indoor firing range, with storage for a mobile climbing wall and additional storage for the fund raising team. The new L-shaped building will be located behind the Chapel.

A new fund raising event has been organised - the first car boot sale to be held at the headquarters, while the summer fete this year will have a pirate theme.

### **News from Members**

Our postbag was empty this time, but we had an e-mail from John and Jacquie Terry shortly after the Christmas 2010 edition was published. They wrote:

"Dear Peter and Les,

We have just received the Christmas Edition of the Friends of the Fourth Newsletter 2010, thank you so much. Do please keep it going, it is great to be kept up to date.

Really writing to say we were so sorry to hear of the death of Dorothy Salter (she was always Mrs Salter to us). When I became involved with "A" Pack with Jacquie as my Assistant, the idea was that we would take over the pack. Mrs Salter's wealth of experience helped us so much with the running of the pack and also with the Camps we ran at Send. It also put us in good stead for the Group we ran in Benfleet, Essex for many years and also the pack in Ardleigh where we were also involved. The reunion was a lovely day allowing us to meet a couple of our "Cubs" from that era. We were so sorry that we did not get there on time because of problems on the M25 but we were determined to get there before the end and being only an hour late we even got the first course, thanks to Sheila Kinton and her helpers. It was also great to see the HQ as it is today, and meet up with so many of the friends we had at that time.

Best wishes to all at the 4th WP.

Jacquie and John

PS - It was lovely to see mention of our forthcoming Golden Wedding on 14th January 2011 and thank you for your congratulations.”

[We hope the celebration went well! Editors]

### **Congratulations!**

Congratulations to John & Dorothy Baldwin on their forthcoming Ruby Wedding anniversary; also to Brian & Sheila Yearley on their Golden Wedding anniversary.

Several 4th WP members were honoured in the National Scout St. George’s Day Awards. Congratulations to all the recipients:

#### Silver Acorn

Ray Hammett

#### Award for Merit

Ben Alembick

Sheila Yearley

Derek Scrine

#### Chief Scout’s Commendation

Steph Green

Jo Stansbridge

Paul Stansbridge

Michael O’Donnell

Tina O’Donnell

### **Explorers win Operation Red Flare**

The District Explorer Scout Unit attached to the Fourth has won the County “Operation Red Flare”. This is how it was reported in the County Newsletter - “Focus”:

## **Record numbers ensure Operation Red Flare is a huge success**

**THE ANNUAL** night incident hike for Explorers, Scout Network members and senior section Guides took place in the Surrey Hills on **March 5th**. A record 32 teams from GLSW and beyond entered and as daylight faded 28 teams started the 12 mile circuit from Bentley Copse. Prior to departure the teams had registered, pitched their tents and submitted themselves to a kit check. The anticlockwise route took teams eastwards over Pitch Hill, Holmbury Hill, and Leith Hill before heading back west via Peaslake to the finish. There were 10 checkpoints, and at some of these teams had to complete a challenge, anything from crossing a minefield on stilts to filling a matchbox with as many different items as possible. The optimum time set was 8 hours, and the maximum time allowed 10 hours. The first team left the start at 18.05 on the Saturday and the earliest finish time was 01.50 on the Sunday. Points were awarded for navigation, timing, incidents, kit check and carrying an inflated balloon successfully around the course. The weather was perfect for walking, but there was no moonlight and some sections of the route posed significant wayfinding challenges. In the end only 10 teams managed to finish and this determined the overall result.

Winners were **Worcester Park ESU** taking part for the first time, and runners-up were last year’s winners **Raynes Park ESU**. The winning score was a massive 436 points, the fastest time 6 hours 30 minutes, and the slowest finishing time 10 hours 45 minutes. As usual Croydon SAS Unit fed 170 hungry mouths for Sunday breakfast, and this was followed by the presentation of the trophies and special certificates designed by Tony Crackett. The special guest was Anne Pilkington, the County Commissioner for Croydon County Guides.

This article reminds us of County Night Challenges and Incident Journeys of yesteryear and they were also usually entitled “Operation ...”. We remember “Operation Touchdown” in July 1963, when the Chief Scout, Sir Charles Maclean, was to land by helicopter at several sites across the

County of Surrey: the Cub Rally on Epsom Downs, Scout Camps at Walton Firs and Priory Park Reigate, Scout Rally at Lloyd Park Croydon, Seniors' and Rovers' Camp at Lawrence Farm, Buckland. The Chief also visited the training facilities at Bentley Copse and there was a reception at the Guildhall, Kingston. In the event, the weather was so appalling that the Chief went everywhere by car. The sight and sound of 10,000 cubs doing the Grand Howl on Epsom Downs, with green dye dripping down their necks from their rain-soaked caps is still with us today! Your editors toured all the sites beforehand checking that all the elsan chemical toilets were fully charged and raring to go! Although the weather threatened to ruin the whole weekend, the old scouting spirit prevailed and "Operation Touchdown" was highly successful even though the Chief did not venture anywhere near a helicopter.

If you have any memories of the various "Operation ..." events, please do let us know.

### **Group History**

Some of our readers may recall the time when the Group had two Cub Packs - "A" and "B". "A" Pack's Akela for many years was Mrs Salter, while "B" Pack was led by Mr Quick, followed by Mrs Hunter. John & Jacquie Terry's e-mail reminded us that both Packs had summer camps at Sendholme, near Send, from time to time. Sendholme was, by then, quite run down, but you could still feel the sense of a Victorian estate there. Once glorious gardens were overgrown and unkempt, and an old dilapidated squash court was used by "B" Pack as a kitchen. The grocer and milkman from the village delivered goods directly to the site and we took a bicycle to ride to the shops to get extra provisions if needed. The estate had been owned by the Lancaster family for many years and the last member of the family, Miss Lancaster, was then in residence. The interior of the big house had not then been updated probably since the Thirties. "B" Pack continued the practice of camping at Sendholme in the early Seventies while Sheila Kinton was Akela, but the estate was sold off following Miss Lancaster's death and is now the corporate headquarters of a large company.

### **Coming Events**

You are cordially invited to attend all of these:

|     |         |         |              |     |        |        |   |
|-----|---------|---------|--------------|-----|--------|--------|---|
| Sat | 2 July  | 12noon  | Summer Fair  | Sat | 12 Nov | 2.30pm | Auction   |
| Sun | 10 July | 11.00am | Scouts' Own  | Sun | 13 Nov | 9.45am | Remembrance Parade<br>at Christ Church with St Philip |
| Sat | 1 Oct   | 2.30pm  | Jumble Sale  | Sat | 26 Nov | 12noon | Christmas Bazaar                                      |
| Sun | 9 Oct   | 11.00am | Scouts' Own  | Sat | 10 Dec | 9.00am | Christmas tree sale                                   |
| Sat | 22 Oct  | 6.30pm  | Casino Night | Sun | 11 Dec | 5.00pm | Scouts' Own   |
| Sat | 5 Nov   | 7.00pm  | Fireworks    | Fri | 23 Dec | 7.30pm | Christmas Eve Service                                 |